United Nations A/68/730–S/2014/66

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
31 January 2014
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 110
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 29 January 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write further to our letters regarding the terrorist activities of organizations associated with Al-Qaida and the support of Saudi Arabia for such activities. On instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your attention to the following information.

In a frantic attempt to undermine a political solution to the crisis in Syria, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has again opted for violence and terrorism to sabotage the Geneva conference. It has sponsored an initiative to bring an end to the infighting between armed terrorist groups, such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Islamic Front, the Army of the Mujahidin, the Nusrah Front and others. It has made every financial, military and logistical effort to unify their ranks against the Syrian State and undermine a political solution to the crisis.

For that purpose, the Saudi Arabian authorities have turned to the Saudi Arabian sheikh Abdullah bin Sulayman al-Muhaysini, one of the religious authorities whom the jihadist groups follow and whose fatwas they consider binding. They have given him the task of launching what he calls the "Umma Initiative" (see annex), which is stated to have been agreed after consultations with the scholars of the Islamic community (umma), including the so-called "wise man of the umma", Ayman al-Zawahiri. It is intended to bring about an immediate ceasefire between the Islamist factions that are in conflict all over Syria. It requests the agreement of the following *takfirist* terrorist groups: Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Islamic Front, the Army of the Mujahidin, the Front of Revolutionaries of Syria and the Nusrah Front.

The initiative was planned by the Saudi Arabian authorities. It is underpinned by fatwas and appeals issued by Al-Qaida figures of authority around the world. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant has responded to Al-Zawahiri's call for an end to the infighting. The leader of the Nusrah Front, Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani, has also expressed his agreement in an audio recording. The Islamic Front and the Army

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of the Mujahidin issued a joint statement on 26 January 2014 (see annex) supporting the so-called Umma Initiative.

The fact that Saudi Arabian sponsorship has gone hand in hand with appeals from the leadership of Al-Qaida shows that the role of Saudi Arabia in Syria and the region has evolved from covert backing to open support for Al-Qaida and associated organizations, whatever their nomenclature. That situation is a flagrant and unprecedented violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 1267 (1999), all of which stress the need to refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts.

In the light of the foregoing, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls for measures to be taken in order for the Security Council committees on counter-terrorism to include the organizations of the Islamic Front and the Army of the Mujahidin on the list of terrorist entities associated with Al-Qaida, alongside Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and the Nusrah Front, both of which have been added to the lists maintained by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) on individuals and entities associated with Al-Qaida.

In order to enforce the Security Council resolutions that stress the need for international cooperation and for all forms of action to combat terrorism, the Syrian Arab Republic calls on the Security Council to prevail on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to refrain from providing any form of active or passive support for terrorist activities in Syria, which are carried out by terrorist groups with various names that belong to Al-Qaida. Those groups receive direct and indirect, covert and open support from certain States within and beyond the region, foremost among which is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Failure to confront terrorism, which is developing in Syria, would undermine the current efforts to find a political solution in Geneva. It would allow terrorism to spread to other States, particularly the neighbouring States that shelter and train terrorists before smuggling them into Syria illegally through their territory.

Attached herewith are a copy of the declaration known as the Umma Initiative, which is referred to above, and a document signed by the terrorist Islamic Front and Army of the Mujahidin, in which both groups express support for the initiative.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 110, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mazen **Adi**
Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex to the identical letters dated 29 January 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Praise be to God, who has said, "But no, by thy Lord! They will not believe till they make thee judge regarding the disagreement between them, then they shall find in themselves no impediment touching thy verdict, but shall surrender in full submission" (Koran 4:65).

May praise and peace be upon the Messenger of God and his companions and family.

The Islamic community (umma) is currently going through a tense time. The current jihad in the Levant has reached a perilous crossroads. If conciliators do not press for our voice to be unified and our differences bridged, jihad in the Levant will enter a dark night of blood and conflict whose end would be known only to God.

Our Prophet (peace be upon him) has left us a bright path whose day is like its night, and anyone who leaves it is doomed. God has made it clear what path the believers should follow when conflict arises: they should turn to His book and the practice of His Messenger (peace be upon him). God Almighty has said: "But no, by thy Lord! They will not believe till they make thee judge regarding the disagreement between them, then they shall find in themselves no impediment touching thy verdict, but shall surrender in full submission".

Today, the umma needs its scholars to set forth the position of the sharia regarding the conflict in the Levant. That position consists of referring to God's law without caveat or condition, as a gathering of scholars has said.

Commenting on the holy verse "If two parties of the believers fight, put things right between them" (Koran 49:9), the book *In the Shade of the Koran* says, "The Koran enjoins those believers who do not belong to one of the two fighting parties to reconcile them. If one of the parties refuses to reconcile or accept God's decree on the issues of contention, the believers must fight them until they return to God's decree ".

In order to determine who is the oppressor and who the victim, the matter must be referred to the law of God Almighty.

Today, I have met with all of the parties to the conflict. I found some convergence in their points of view, and all agreed on the need to refer to God's law.

The present initiative, which is to be known as the Umma Initiative, is intended to fill out the details.

We have consulted with the scholars of the umma in the East and West, that God may allow the Initiative to save the blood of the monotheists and enable them to speak with one voice.

We were pleased and, with God's permission, took it as a good sign that the wise man of the umma, the sheikh and jihadist Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, expressed himself early this morning and made the same point that we had intended to make. It

seems as though God was giving a sign that the initiative would come to a good conclusion.

The points of the Umma Initiative are as follows:

1. An immediate ceasefire shall apply across the Levant.

2. A sharia court shall be formed comprising independent judges acceptable to all parties.

3. All of the battalions active in the battlefield that sign this Initiative shall guarantee that the decision of the sharia court is carried out.

4. Your brethren in the centre for jihad advocacy shall nominate ten sharia experts belonging to the factions that have stood aside in the current strife, such as the Hawks of Glory, the Green Battalion and the Army of Al-Aqsa Battalions and others, all of whom we consider to be jihadists whose beliefs are sound. The names shall be submitted to each of the factions in conflict so that they can choose the greatest possible number that they find acceptable, explaining why they have rejected the other names.

If no agreement can be reached on the names, the negotiators shall nominate others. The battlefield of the Levant will not be empty of competent scholars and students, whether emigrants or local supporters.

We believe that the mechanism is necessary. Otherwise, a considerable time will pass before there is any agreement on arbitrators.

5. Within five days from the announcement of the Umma Initiative, parties shall state whether they agree to the arbitration of the sharia court. That period shall begin with the publication of this statement, and shall therefore run from 22 to 26 Rabi' I A.H. 1435.

6. A media centre shall be set up on the social networking sites Twitter and Facebook to announce and report on the outcomes of the arbitration.

7. Each party shall appoint a representative to relay its views and negotiate.

8. The judges shall determine a time period in which to conclude consideration of all of the issues. If any side causes a delay, the judges shall be forced to declare the matter and request those people who are on the side of good to bring that party back to arbitration and reconciliation.

9. We hope that Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Islamic Front, the Army of the Mujahidin and the Front of Revolutionaries of Syria will, within the prescribed time period, make statements agreeing to the proceedings. We also hope that the Nusrah Front and the other groups on the battlefield of the Levant will express their position on the Initiative, and that the scholars, mujahidin, writers and journalists of the umma will support it.

Lastly, we urge the umma to stand together, support the Initiative and sign it on the website. We call on the leaders of the mujahidin to place the interests of the umma before those of their groups. To everyone we say: "If you do not do this, there will be strife in the land and great corruption" (Koran 8:73).

If you do not do it, the Levant will enter a lasting conflict whose end is known only to God. If you do not do it, what will become of God's law, for the sake of

which we went into battle? If you do not do it, you will have violated the command of your Lord, who has said: "But no, by thy Lord! They will not believe till they make thee judge regarding the disagreement between them, then they shall find in themselves no impediment touching thy verdict, but shall surrender in full submission".

God prevails in His purpose, but most people know not.

Sheikh Dr. Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Sulayman al-Muhaysini
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
23 January 2014, 9.21 a.m.